

**VOTE
NOV. 4**

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VALLEY FREE PRESS

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NOVEMBER 2003

SERVING THE LEHIGH VALLEY'S GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY SINCE 1998!



QUEER EYE GUY CARSON KRESSLEY

"Do you get a lot of mainstream people coming up to you?" asks Pride's Paul Willinstein on stage chatting with Carson Kressley at Lehigh University, during his appearance as part of the Queer Film Festival on Oct. 25.

"Sure, all the time," quips Carson, "Women run up to me in airports saying DO MY HUSBAND, DO MY HUSBAND, and I want to say, honey, you don't really want me to DO your husband." Then as the laughter dies down Carson says with a wink to the audience, "Well...this is Packer Hall after all."

Carson's appearance is a major event in the GLBT history of the Lehigh Valley. A native of Lehigh County, Carson went to Northwestern Lehigh High School with Pride Vice President Constance Kristofik. In fact, one of the highlights of the evening was Carson's hilarious comments on giant projections of their yearbook pictures.

Quick-witted patter keeps everyone smiling: "What are the 'in' colors? -- 'Wear lots of colors.'" If



Pride Board & Queer Film Festival Committee members who worked tirelessly on the wonderful Carson Kressley event: Front (L to R): Constance Kristofik, Pam Pillsbury, Carson Kressley, Gary Lee Schaefer, Mark Bodkin. Back (L to R): Rita Bouchededid, Liz Sherry, Brad Wentz, Chris Sylvia, Banko.

you could be a superhero, who would you be? "Oh Wonder Woman, look I have the jewelry." Showing off a huge silver and turquoise cuff bracelet. Do you think there is anyone who hasn't heard of Queer Eye? "It would be hard to not hear of it, I guess if you were 'Nell' or something," alluding to the Jody Foster movie.

Explaining how he got the spot on the show, Carson told the audience about being an assistant at Ralph Lauren, then hearing about the Queer Eye auditions. "Over 700 guys tested for the part, and they kept calling me back and I'd have to miss work. I wanted to say to them, 'Are you going to hire me or just make me lose my real job.'"

He explained that the Fab Five actually produce the show themselves, from picking the straight guy, to finding sources for all the products. "I once suggested a pink jacket and suddenly all the pink jackets in the country were bought up, yeah, all 25 of them...oops!" There are no writers except the guys themselves. Each week eighty hours of film is shot, which is cut down to a 49 minute show. Coming up: an "Ambush Show," with surprise checks on some of the guys.

"We don't see it as a make-over show, it's a make-better show," says Carson, "I think the reason it's successful is that it has heart. Too many reality shows are mean, we aren't going to vote somebody off an island, we're helping people."

Showing a more serious side, when asked about what he would say to young people coming out in the Lehigh Valley, especially at his old High School, Carson stresses honesty. "The worst thing you can do is not be yourself. Keep fighting the fight, be a role model, be proud of who you are."

**TRANSGENDER
DAY OF
REMEMBRANCE
WILL BE
COMMEMORATED
ON NOV. 20
SEE PAGE 5**

**MCCLY'S
ANNUAL
AWARDS
COVERED
ON PAGE 5**

**LAST
MINUTE
VOTER
INFORMATION
ON PAGE 6**

**LV GAY
MEN'S CHORUS
CONCERT
NOV. 22
SEE PAGE 3**

**WORLD
AIDS DAY
EVENT
AT UUCV
SEE PAGE 3**

**RAFAEL
CANIZARES
ART
EXHIBITION
ON VIEW
UNTIL NOV. 23
SEE PAGE 5**

**INSURANCE COMPANIES
THAT GIVE D.P. COVERAGE -- PAGE 7**

VOTE - TUESDAY NOV. 4TH

by Carolyn Lewis

Carolyn Lewis is off this month.

This "true story" was supplied by a VFP reader.

A local lesbian mom told us that she had taken her child to an after school class last week and her partner, the child's other mom, came along to see how class was going. The other mom met the (just out of college) teacher for the first time.

This week, the teacher of the class hurried up to the mom for a quick word. "After I met your partner in the last class," she said, "I rushed right home...and called my mom... to tell her she could have grandchildren after all!"

What's That About?

Readers write or email "What's That About?" editors with questions about gay and lesbian issues.

Dear WTA: I saw an angry letter to the editor in the Advocate this month, decrying the use of the word queer. What's VFP's policy? **Signed Q**

Dear Q, VFP has been reticent about using the word queer for a long time. Many people find it offensive. Check any dictionary and you find synonyms like: "not normal, touched, strange," and even "worthless." But there is also a part of the population who uses the word queer because they feel it is inclusive of all facets of our population.

Now however, pop culture has taken over the word queer and softened it. Queer Eye for the Straight Guy is a popular show, that is watched and liked by millions. So queer has become a synonym -- at least in some people's eye's for "extraordinary." Now it is not viewed by as many as an insult. Although, since all the "queer" characters on Queer Eye are gay men... the word has lost much of its inclusiveness. To most people, queer means gay, not all the facets of GLBTIQIA society.

Regardless, due to mainstream acceptance the word has lost some of the hateful qualities that it once had. So VFP will include it when it is in a title or group name. We still recognize that some people find it offensive. To those people we apologize. If you have thoughts on this subject, please send them to What's That About.

Dear WTA: I've noticed a trend in some of the local newspapers to include more anti-gay rhetoric in articles that are about GLBT events or issues. Why do newspaper feel they should seek out anti-gay people whenever gay events are mentioned? **Signed, News Reader**

Dear News: VFP is concerned about this trend. We feel there are two reasons for it. One is the current anti-gay backlash being seen around the country in response to the overturning of US sodomy laws and the passage of marriage in Canada. The other is newspapers feeling that drama and conflict sells papers, even when there isn't any conflict there.

Not all the media includes anti-gay opinions whenever a GLBT person speaks. Some articles are very fair. But there have been several articles locally that have been very unfair in this respect. It is unethical for a journalist to interview someone for an event story, or a story about gay life, and not tell the person from the onset that the journalist will be seeking anti-GLBT people to soap box their viewpoints. This is not a question of "balanced reporting."



RAGS TO RICHES TAKE THE FIRST STEP

by Denise McKelvey

Denise McKelvey is on vacation from her column this month. Denise will be back next month with more answers and information about the financial concerns of the GLBT Community.

WHAT'S THAT ABOUT -- CONTINUED

To stop this practice, VFP encourages any GLBT person who is being interviewed by the media for any reason, to ask the reporter directly whether the article will include anti-GLBT viewpoints. If the article is about a piece of legislation, one should probably expect both sides of the issue. But if the article is to be about a community event or about someone's life...there is no reason to include anti-GLBT people's views. Judge for yourself whether it really makes sense for the article to include hate speech about GLBT lives. Consider whether a reporter would be justified in asking for anti-minority viewpoints if this story were about an event or the life of a different minority person rather than a GLBT person.

Dear WTA: I saw in the Allentown Chronicle Police Blotter that a guy had been arrested and charged with indecent assault in a public park rest room, for groping a male cop. This sounded a lot like sting to me, directed at gay men. I had thought that these undercover stings, that waste police time and are completely victimless, were over in Allentown? **Signed WTA**

Dear W: VFP and some elected and appointed officials of the city of Allentown are looking into this. As you may recall, Allentown's Chief Kuhn ended these stings in the park. But Kuhn isn't the Chief any more and they may have started up again. We will find out and let VFP readers know. In the mean time, don't do stupid things. If someone has tried to entrap you into a bad situation like this, please contact VFP. Call 610-432-5449.

PRIDE BOARD SEARCH EXTENDED

Pride of the Lehigh Valley has extended their search for new board members. Each new board member will hold a two year term and will be part of the transition from the old to the new entity, Pride of the Greater Lehigh Valley. Those who are interested in applying for a position on the board and who have attended at least one Pride meeting in the past year are asked to email a letter of intent and resume to info@pridelv.org. All interests must be received by noon on Wednesday, November 19. From these applicants, the nominating committee will present a slate of reviewed candidates for the Annual Meeting on December 10.

PRIDE FUNDRAISER AT STONEWALL

Come meet the purty girls your mother warned you about at the Stonewall on Wednesday, November 5, beginning at Midnight. Hop on a hay bale to catch the silliest drag show you've ever seen. Hee Haw Hunnee's stars; Sylvia Silverberg, Emotion, Vaunessa Vale, Teri Courtney and a few other barnyard beauties. No cover. Show tips and a 50/50 raffle will benefit Pride of the Lehigh Valley (www.pridelv.org). The show is being organized by the Friends of Pride. (21+)

FOR LEGAL INFO ON 2ND PARENT ADOPTION

...or if your lawyer has questions call The Center for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights in Philadelphia toll free at 1-866-LGBT-LAW.

Valley Free Press does not discriminate on the bases listed in the anti-discrimination statement on page 8, and asks that organizations or individuals which request VFP to publish information about their events maintain a similar policy.

HOT NEWS

B&N GLBT BOOK CLUB

The Gay and Lesbian Book group convenes at Barnes & Nobel on MacArthur Road in Whitehall, the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 7:00PM to discuss chosen books of, by, about or of interest to the gay community. **EVERYONE** is welcome. For information call the store: 610-821-7732. No meeting in December. The November selection will be decided in October. -- **Tuesday, JANUARY 19, 7:00PM** "At Swim, Two Boys" by Jamie O'Neill.

GLORA

Upcoming Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown (GLORA) events include: Nov. 1: Halloween party and Dec. 7: GLORA's anniversary dinner at Bowers Hotel. For more info write GLORA at GLORAINPA@aol.com or at GLORA PO Box 541, Bethlehem, PA 18016-0541.

ACCO CONCERT

ACCO, A Chorus Celebrating Women, will be presenting their Winter Solstice Concert on Sunday, December 21 at 7:30 pm. The Winter Solstice Concert is a unique celebration of the season of light with music by women composers, past and present. The concert will be performed at Christ Lutheran Church, 1245 Hamilton Street, Allentown. Admission is \$12 in advance/ \$15 at the door. For tickets or information, call 610-434-5074.

BE A SUPER VOTER, VOTE ON NOVEMBER 4TH

WACHOVIA GROUP

LV Wachovia Banks now have a GLBT employee resource group called GALEA (Gay & Lesbian Employee Association). Wachovia offers a full range of domestic partner benefits to its employees. Contact GALEA@Wachovia.com if you are a Wachovia employee and want to join.

GLOSS 2004 SKATING

GLOSS is planning two roller skating events in 2004. They will be: April 1, 2004 and October 7, 2004. The April event will benefit PA-GALA.

GLOSS EVENTS

The next GLOSS (the Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society) game night will be on Saturday, November 8, 7pm at Tim's house in Fleetwood. Contact GLOSS for directions: 610-434-2966. For more information about GLOSS check the website: <http://www.gloss.org/indoor1.htm>

GLOSS PINOCCHLE GROUP

If you like to play pinocchle, or are interested in learning, please contact GLOSS which hopes to start having pinocchle game nights soon.

LV GAY MEN'S CHORUS CONCERT

The Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus enters its tenth season with a concert on November 22 at 8:00 at Wesley United Methodist Church in Bethlehem.

The concert will feature a special section of songs by Jacques Brel, a modern troubadour. Born in Belgium in 1929, he worked as an actor and director, but above all as a singer-songwriter. The subject of the 1969 revue, "Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris," died in Paris in 1978 and was buried on the South Seas Island where he had gone to live several years before.

Tickets are available for \$12.00 from any Chorus member, or by contacting (610) 366-3320. Senior and student discounts are available.

HAVEN YOUTH GROUP

HAVEN, the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered, Questioning (GLBTQ) YOUTH GROUP, seeks FACILITATORS to lead meetings for GLBT youth and to chaperone field trips & special events. Facilitators must be 25 or older and enjoy working with young people. HAVEN provides training (background check required). HAVEN is sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley. For information: havenfacilitators@yahoo.com or 610-868-2153.

HAVEN MEETINGS are held every Wednesday from 7:00 - 9:00PM at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 424 Center Street, Bethlehem. Meetings are open to GLBTAQ youth ages 14 - 20.

MCC WALKERS - NEW NIGHT

MCC Walkers has changed to Thursday evening. Meet at MCC's parking lot at 6pm.

STEVIE Z SCHEDULE

Stevie Z events to include: Fridays November 14 and December 12 - Pianist at MooseLounge (Allentown) from 9PM-Midnite. NO Cover charge before 11PM - \$5 after that. Nov. 2 - Stevie accompanies the LVGMC at the 'All Together Now' Service at Wesley Church at 3PM. November 22 - Pianist for LVGMC at their Fall Concert at Wesley Church in Bethlehem, 8PM. See Stevie or any chorus member for tickets. In Oct/ Nov Stevie Z will contribute half his tips to Lambda Legal, Dec/Jan, half the tips will go to PFLAG.

ALL TOGETHER NOW IN FAITH

To further the call for welcome to all who worship Jesus, a group of 30 Lehigh Valley Christians and several organizations of good will, are joining together to celebrate inclusive faith. Location: Wesley United Methodist Church, located at 2540 Center Street, Bethlehem (a mile south of Route 22 on Route 512). Date & Time: Sunday November 2, at 3PM. Guest Speaker: Rev. Patrick Malloy, Rector of Grace Episcopal Church in Allentown. With the Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus.

This event is sponsored by "All Together Now", an ecumenical group of Lehigh Valley Christians, both straight and GLBT, who have come together to further full inclusion of all in the Christian faith community. This is a wheelchair accessible event. A Sign language interpreter will be present.

For information: <http://mysite.verizon.net/vze1r7tj/alltogethernow/> or contact Jim Palmquist at bluemountain@entermail.net or Blue Mountain Group, P.O. Box 3007, Allentown, PA 18106 or 610-398-1286.

WORLD AIDS DAY BENEFIT

Join the Bethlehem Health Bureau in commemorating WORLD AIDS DAY, Monday, December 1, 6:00pm to 8:30pm at a benefit at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 424 Center St. Bethlehem. Special guest: "One Vision, One Mission" Productions. Also a presentation by "Visions" Lehigh University's HIV/AIDS outreach group. Refreshments will be served and a silent auction will be held. 100% of donations will go to those in the Lehigh Valley infected or affected by the HIV/AIDS virus. Donations will be accepted at the Health Department up to NOVEMBER 30. For information please call: 610-865-7087.

FATHER MALLOY IN THE ADVOCATE

Father Patrick Malloy of Grace Church in Allentown was featured in a My Perspective article in the October 28th issue of the national GLBT news magazine The Advocate. The article included a really great photo

CALENDAR

AA --AA meetins on Wednesdays at MCCLV, Begin at 7pm
ACCO-A Chorus Celebrating Women, AIDS Outreach-112 N. 5th St. Allentown, PA 610.435.8424
AIDSWALK- AIDSWALK Lehigh Valley - 610.974.8701 www.regiononline.com/lvaids
ASC-AIDS Service Center 610.974.8701
BMA- Bucks/Montgomery Alliance for Gay and Lesbian Concerns 215-529-0360
B&N- Barnes and Noble Gay&Lesbian Book Club, White Hall store, Monthly, 7:00pm
BEARS-1st Saturdays Monthly, 8pm, at the Stonewall, Moose Lounge 610-814-6916, Mtnbear@fast.net.
CIVIC and 19th St. Theater, 527 N 19th St, 610-432-8943, <civictheater.com>
Enigma Players-- qacres@prolog.net
equal@agere- email: equal@agere.com
FACT- Fighting AIDS Continuously Together 610.820.5519
GLEE at Air Products
GLISN- at Dun & Bradstreet, <vagrathollow.com/GLISN/>
GLORA- Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown (Social gatherings, various dates) Newsletter- The Tassle. Write to: GLORA, PO Box 541, Bethlehem, PA 18016-0541, email: GLORAinPA@aol.com
GLOSS - Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society, P.O.Box 21862 Lehigh Valley, PA 18002 610.434.2966
GLOW-at PPL
GLSEN-Gay, Lesbian, Straight, Education Network, 610-867-6641, csbarron21@aol.com
Meetings, at 7:00 pm in rooms 108-109 of the Seeger Student Union, Muhlenberg College
GMLV- Gay Men of the Lehigh Valley, 2nd Saturdays Monthly 7pm, 610-709-8800
HAVEN GLBT Youth Group of the UUCV LV- call: 610-868-2153, email: havenyouthgroup@hotmail.com or zinnes@verizon.net
HMFF-Hope Ministry Family Fellowship, Sundays, 11 am, Open Space Gallery, 931 Hamilton St. 610-791-0716
Integrity- Lesbian & Gay Episcopalians Family & Friends meets quarterly. 610-758-8642 gamba.guy@verizon.net
LVGMC -Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus, email: info@lvmgc.org, <www.lvmgc.org> 610-366-3320, rehearsals: Wesley United Methodist Church, 2540 Center St., Bethlehem
MCC - Metropolitan Community Church, Merchants Square Mall, 1901 S. 12th Street, Allentown Services: 10:30am & 6pm, mcllehighvalley@yahoo.com, http://www.mccclv.org 610-709-8800
NCC - Northampton Community College GLB Student Union, 610.861.5541 (#1386) or 882-2531
19th St & Civic Theatre - 610.432.8943
Out There- Students at Cedar Crest College
OVOM-LV Documentary Film Org.
PA-GALA - PA Gay And Lesbian Alliance for Political Action, (Candidate Info Booklet, & Political Lobbying) For membership: send \$20 to: P.O.Box 20825 Lehigh Valley 18002 610.432.5449 pa-gala.org
PARENTS-GLBT parent's group: 610-262-2519
PFLAG - LV Parents Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays, 1st Tues. 1st Pres. Church Allentown 610.967.5219 <http://www.eastern-pa-pflag.org/>
Pride - Pride of the Lehigh Valley, (Pride Festival) 610.770.6200, email: <lvpride@hotmail.com>, <www.pridelv.org>
QuEST - Student group at Lafayette College <QuEST_Lafayette@hotmail.com>

NOVEMBER 2003 -VOTE NOV. 7TH

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---------------------------------|--------|--|--------------------|--|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | | | | | Raphael's 1-23 | 1 WDIY BEARS GLOSS GLOA |
| 2 OVOM AUCTION MCC All Together | 3 RAA | 4 Election Day LV PFLAG LVGMC GLOSS | 5 HAVEN PFLAG M AA | 6 AGCO GLOSS MCC WALKING | 7 | 8 WDIY GLOSS Game Night |
| 9 MCC UUCV GLOSS | 10 RAA | 11 GLOSS LVGMC | 12 AA HAVEN | 13 ACCO RAA GLOSS MCC WALKING | 14 StevieZ GLOSS bowing | 15 WDIY GLOSS |
| 16 MCC UUCV GLOSS | 17 RAA | 18 PFLAG R GLOSS Pride mtg LVGMC B&N BOOK CLUB | 19 HAVEN AA | 20 ACCO RAA Transgender Day of Remembrance | 21 | 22 GAY MENS CHORUS CONCERT GLOSS WDIY |
| 23 | 24 RAA | 25 MCC LVGMC GLOSS 7 Senses | 26 AA HAVEN | 27 RAA GLOSS ACCO MCC WALKING | 28 | 29 GLOSS WDIY |
| 30 | | | | | | |

DECEMBER 2003

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| | 1 GLSEN RAA | 2 LV PFLAG GLOSS LVGMC GLOSS | 3 HAVEN PFLAG M AA | 4 RAA ACCO GLOSS MCC WALKING | 5 | 6 |
| 7 GLORA Dinner HMFF UUCV GLOSS MCC | 8 RAA GLSEN | 9 LVGMC GLOSS | 10 HAVEN Pride mtg AA | 11 MCC WALKING RAA ACCO GLOSS | 12 Stevie Z GLOSS bowing | 13 GLOSS WDIY |
| 14 HMFF UUCV MCC GLOSS | 15 RAA | 16 GLOSS LVGMC B&N BOOK CLUB | 17 HAVEN Pride mtg AA | 18 ACCO PFLAG P RAA GLOSS MCC WALKING | 19 | 20 WDIY GLOSS |
| 21 HMFF UUCV MCC ACCO GLOSS | 22 RAA | 23 LVGMC GLOSS | 24 HAVEN AA | 25 Christmas | 26 | 27 GLORA GLOSS WDIY |
| 28 GLORA MCC to NYC PRIDE PARADE | 29 RAA Spector | 30 GLOSS LVGMC | 31 AA | New Year's Eve | | |

JANUARY 2004

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| | | | | 1 MCC WALKING RAA | 2 | 3 WDIY 7 Senses BEARS GLOSS |
| 4 WDIY HMFF UUCV MCC | 5 RAA | 6 GLOSS MCC LV PFLAG LVGMC | 7 HAVEN AA | 8 RAA GLOSS MCC WALKING | 9 StevieZ | 10 |
| 11 HMFF WDIY UUCV MCC GLOSS Bowling | 12 RAA | 13 LVGMC PFLAG R | 14 HAVEN AA | 15 RAA GLOSS PFLAG P MCC WALKING | 16 | 17 GLOSS MCC |
| 18 WDIY HMFF | 19 MCC RAA | 20 GLOSS B&N BOOK CLUB LVGMC MCC | 21 HAVEN AA | 22 RAA GLOSS MCC WALKING | 23 | 24 INTEGRITY |
| 25 WDIY MCC HMFF | 26 MCC RAA | 27 GLOSS LVGMC | 28 HAVEN AA PRIDE | 29 RAA GLOSS MCC WALKING | 30 | 31 |

Quakers-Lehigh Valley Friends Meeting-Route 512 1/2 mi. North of Rte 22 Bethlehem, PA. Worship at 9:30 am. (610)691-3411.
RAA- Rainbow AA meetings, Mon. & Thurs. At 16th and Turner.
Ren- Renaissance Transgendered Assoc., P.O.Box 157 Trexlertown 18087 - 610-814-0530/0531
Rainbow Space - Muhlenberg College Organization 610.821.3244
Reading P-FLAG-610.488.7533 or 670.8029
Safe Space-At Lehigh U. 610.758.5973
Saint John's Lutheran Church-A welcoming, gay affirming church, 32 S. 5th st. Allentown 610.435.1587
Softball-(Women's) call Diamonz, 610.865.1028
Spectrum-at Lehigh Univ. 610.758.5973
T.O. - Theatre Outlet-29 Nth 9th St, Allentown, 610-820-9270.
Unity-26 N. 3rd St. Emmaus, 767-4417
UUCLV - Unitarian Universalist Church LV, 424 Center St., Bethlehem, 18018 610.866.7652.
VFP - Valley Free Press, 610.432.5449, liztrish@aol.com
VYH - Valley Youth House for emotionally troubled GLBT youth 610.432.6481
Wachovia-GALEA- Gay And Lesbian Employee Association. Contact GALEA@Wachovia.com
WDIY - WDIY - 88.1 fm 93.9 fm Sat. 7:00 pm This Way Out, Assorted Women 7:30 pm. 610-694-8100.88.

SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS:

GLBT YOUTH GROUP
HAVEN - WEDNESDAYS
AA @ MCC - WEDNESDAYS
LV BEARS - 1ST SATURDAYS
GAY MEN-LV - 2ND SATURDAYS
LV PFLAG - 1ST TUESDAYS
MONROE PFLAG - 1ST THURSDAYS
READING - PFLAG 3RD TUESDAYS
POTTSVILLE PFLAG
- 3RD THURSDAYS
GLOSS VOLLEYBALL-TUESDAYS
GLOSS TENNIS - SUNDAYS
GLOSS RACQUETBALL-TUES & SATS
MCC BOOK STUDY 2ND & 4TH TUES
MCC WALKING - THURSDAYS
MCC READING&COFFEE -1ST FRIDAYS

NOV 1-23 - CANIZARES
ART EXHIBIT@ALLENTOWN MUSEUM
NOV 1 - GLORIA HALLOWEEN PARTY
NOV 2 - OVOM AUCTION
NOV 2 - ALL TOGETHER NOW
NOV 4 - ELECTION DAY
NOV 4 - LEHIGH VALLEY PFLAG
NOV 5 - PRIDE @ STONEWALL
NOV 8 - GLOSS GAME NIGHT
NOV 14 - STEVIEZ @ MOOSELOUNGE
NOV 14 - GLOSS BOWLING
NOV 18 - PRIDE MEETING
NOV 20 - TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE
NOV 22 - LVGMC CONCERT
NOV 25 - DRUM CIRCLE 7SENSES
DEC 1 - WORLD AIDS DAY BENEFIT
DEC 7 - GLORIA ANNIV. DINNER
DEC 9 LEHIGH VALLEY PFLAG
DEC 10 - PRIDE MEETING
DEC 12 - GLOSS BOWLING
DEC 12 - STEVIEZ @ MOOSELOUNGE
DEC 17 - PRIDE MEETING
DEC 21 - ACCO SOLTICE CONCERT
JAN 6 - LEHIGH VALLEY PFLAG
JAN 19 - B&N GLBT BOOKCLUB
FEB 13 - MCC MARRIAGE ACTION
FEB 14 - MCC NFTMD CELEBRATION
APR 1 - GLOSS SKATING
APR 27 - PRIMARY ELECTION

INFORMATION
SUBJECT TO CHANGE
CALL TO CONFIRM!
TO POST INFO: 610-432-5449 EMAIL:
LIZTRISH@AOL.COM

MCCLV AWARDS

MCCLV celebrated its 19th year of ministry with a spirit-filled Anniversary Banquet. Over 100 people were recognized with "Rainbow Service Awards" for serving MCCLV. Other top awards went to:



DJ Landis: The Teddy Bear Care Award for "touching others with a generous spirit of caring."



Steve Ziminsky: The Servant Spirit Award, presented by Worship Ministry Leader Anthony Young for Steve's professionalism and sharing his gift of music ministry.



Erin Puffenberger: The Spirit of Courage Award, for a non-member of MCCLV who "actively champions the GLBT community with courage and enthusiasm."



Genette Heinz: The Shepherd's Staff Award presented by MCCLV Pastor Rev. Beth Goudy for "the MCCLV congregant who is steady in their lifting up of the church community and is committed to the growth of the church."

DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

Renaissance of the Lehigh Valley and MCCLV partner for Transgender Day of Remembrance with a worship service on Thursday, November 20 at 7p.m. in the MCCLV Sanctuary. The Transgender Day of Remembrance was started in 1999 as a response to the growing issue of anti-transgender violence leading to death. Following the service, there will be a panel discussion. Refreshments provided by Renaissance and MCCLV. To participate phone 610-395-8289 or e-mail racquel-lv@webtv.net. For more information on the history of the observance and national information, please visit the powerful website: <http://www.rememberingourdead.org>

ART BY RAFAEL CANIZARES

There is still time to view a terrific exhibition of the work of Rafael Canizares at the Allentown Art Museum. The exhibit of large and small ceramic vessels will be on display until November 23. Several articles in the local mainstream press have mentioned Rafael's commitment to exploring his own life as a gay Latin American through his work.

7 SENSES EVENTS

Walk 7 Senses Healing Labyrinth, Saturday November 8, 2003 1-4p.m. FREE. Women's Drum Circle! Every Fourth Tuesday, this month...November 25, 2003 6:30- 8 p.m. Experience the goddess energy in every woman. No previous drumming experience necessary. Drums will be provided if needed-Basket collection. Cat Coley facilitates. Call 610-807-3677 or visit www.7senseshealth.com to learn about all events!

RANTS & RAVES BY STEPHEN T. LIBBY

With Thanksgiving fast approaching and Christmas, Hanukah, and Kwanza just around the corner, I am reminded of all that I have been blessed with. So here is a brief list of some things I am thankful for. As flighty, opinionated and delusional as I can be at times, my family, friends and boyfriends could not be more supportive of my dreams. Bless you all! I have two great children (Puppy & Otis). I am very proud of their accomplishments (food consumption & their determination to sleep 16+ hours a day).

I am thankful for the memory of tagging along with my mother to Aunt Judy's Beauty Salon and hearing Johnny Cash's A Boy Named Sue for the first time. I knew I was different and that song touched a chord.

I am thankful for the memories we made last night partying with Carson Kressley. He and I sang a duet in Diamonz karaoke bar and then he asked Shawn, Eric and me to dance at the Stonewall. FUN!! He was very approachable and genuine. He told me I should be thankful for brown and leather (so I am).

I am thankful for Liz Bradbury and Tim Chadwick's big hearted laughs. Carol's hugs. For Shawn & Eric's Families. I am thankful for the dream (if not reality) of peace someday. I am thankful for the community who supports One Vision One Mission Productions. We are embarking on another venture in 2004; to produce "Gaydar" (do you have it?), a magazine for the Lehigh Valley.

I am thankful for The Valley Free Press, PA GALA, TO, FACT, GLOSS and other local groups and individuals for their efforts in making this a better place to live.

I am thankful for eye candy like Ashton Kutcher, Colin Farrell (always my favorite...until next week), Tyrese, Nick Lachey (don't worry about the difference between tuna and chicken, Nick, I'm the other white meat!) I am thankful for Queer TV, cinema, and literature. I am thankful for days I can sleep in (though I usually don't) and for the change of seasons. For our fighting forces (though not the reason) and our right to freedom of speech. For the smell of turkey dinner. For running in the cool fall mornings. For love, life and the pursuit of happiness.

The one thing I am NOT thankful for is dust. Who the hell invented dust? They should have to clean it up! Bless you all this Thanksgiving!

MCC & PFLAG SET FREEDOM TO MARRY DAY CELEBRATION DATE

PFLAG & MCCLV Present...National Freedom to Marry Day 2004 February 14, 2004. The celebration will be held at MCCLV at 7 p.m. The event will consist of a worship service and party/dance. In addition to a same-sex marriage ceremony, a blessing of relationships will be offered. Couples who would like to participate in the marriage ceremony are asked to contact the church at 610-709-8800 for more information about the requirements for marriage. Any couple wanting their relationship blessed at the service is invited to participate.

The NFTMD Planning Team meets the third Monday of every month, 7 p.m., at the church. Please join in the fun and help plan another great event! MCCLV is located at 1901 South 12th Street, in the Merchant's Square Mall.

SHORT STORY READINGS

MCCLV will be hosting a new community wide event on the 1st Friday of each month beginning in December 2003 and running through April 2004, "Readings of Short Stories with Coffee." Similar to the NPR radio program "Selected Shorts" on Sunday nights, a new reader each month will be reading light, humorous selective short stories from various authors.

First up on Friday, December 5, Readings with Mark. Mark will be reading the short story, Santaland Dairies, written by David Sedaris. Mark's short story selection is a humorous account of a part-time seasonal employee who takes a job as an elf at Macy's Department Store! The public is welcome and refreshments will be provided.

MCC MARRIAGE ACTION

MCC churches across the country plan to go to local county courthouses on February 13, 2004 to bring attention to the need for legal same-sex marriage. If you are interested in participating, please join a special planning meeting, Monday, October, 27 at 7 p.m. at the church.

PFLAG MEETING TIMES

PFLAG LV (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) meets monthly at Allentown's First Presbyterian Church (Cedar Crest Blvd. and Tilghman Sts.) on first Tuesdays, at 7:00 pm., Rm 115. Contact: pflag@fast.net or (610) 967-5219 for information. There are also PFLAG meetings in Reading, Pottsville & Monroe County: See page 4 for meeting dates and times.

NEW TIME FOR "GAY -- A.A."

Open Discussion Wednesday Evenings 7:30 p.m. Doors Open and coffee at 7:00pm -- Gratitude And You Meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous -- at the Metropolitan Community Church of the Lehigh Valley, 1901 South 12th Street, Room 208. Contact Person- Joanie W. 610-966-1992.

COORDINATOR FOR TRANSGENDER NETWORK

Anita Lee, leader of the Reenders-Monroe County PFLAG group, has accepted the position of East Coast Regional TCoD for the PFLAG affiliate TNET which is the PFLAG Transgender Network. This encompasses TNET chapters in the NY, NJ and PA vicinity and any PFLAG chapters that might be interested. For info contact Anita Lee at 570-620-1234.

Don't forget the OVOM Celebrity Autograph and Memorabilia Auction, Nov. 2, 2-6pm, Baum School of Art, 5th & Linden, Allentown, Admission: FREE.

7 TRISH'S COLUMN

By Patricia Sullivan

BUT WHO PROVIDES THE INSURANCE? PART 2



I had no idea how hard it would be to get this information. Many corporations don't list their phone numbers. Some lines were terminally busy or out of order. Others were just frustrating. For example, Highmark Blue Shield's public relations representative would not give me information, but he made an appointment for a phone interview with a Vice President. The PR person called the morning of the interview to confirm, but then two hours after the interview was to take place, called back to say they had decided not to talk to us about their policy after all. When I asked, "Can't you just tell me whether or not your company gives these benefits?" He said, "No."

But I was able to find some helpful information. Many insurance companies do provide domestic partner (D.P.) coverage to businesses with over 100 employees. There was a time when this kind of coverage was never available from insurance companies. Now any business of over 100 employees who wants to provide this coverage can find a comprehensive policy from competing companies. But what about businesses under 100 employees?

The good news is there are companies who underwrite D.P. policies for small businesses. Well known providers include **Keystone** and **CIGNA**. **AFLAC**, which is a supplemental insurer, will also underwrite D.P. policies. I am sure there are other companies who will also underwrite (D.P.) policies, but they will not confirm it to me over the phone. Your company will have to ask.

Two companies that made it clear they don't give D.P. policies are Health America and Health Assurance. They provided me with this statement:

To keep benefits affordable for small groups (2-99 employees), Health America and Health Assurance have streamlined our benefit offerings in to several standard plans. The standard plans include the type of benefits most often requested by owners of small companies. **Coverage for domestic partners is rarely requested among this employer segment. Therefore, it is not part of our standard package for small groups.** For groups of 100 or more employees, we can customize plan designs to accommodate coverage for domestic partners **if requested by the employer.**

There is no good reason not to give D.P. benefits to same-sex partners. Cost is not the real issue. After all, if one of us leaves a job, the chances are 9 to 1 that the employer will replace us with a straight person for whom the business will have to provide family coverage. And despite the insurance companies position that same-sex domestic partners are more costly to cover, the AFSCME Fact Sheet on Cobrahealth.com says "experience does not support this assumption."

Further more, fewer than 3% of employees actually sign up for domestic partner benefits. Considering same-sex D.P. partners only, the number drops to less than 1%. Additionally, one of the most expensive health problems is high risk pregnancy and premature birth, which is far more common in the straight population than among same-sex partners.

I found two major obstacles limiting our progress toward equality in the provision of insurance coverage. **First, we don't ask for the coverage from our employers.** Have you asked? I know this may be hard for some of you to do, but, how would you feel if your family had a health crisis and you later found out that if you only had asked, you might have been able to get the coverage you need.

The second obstacle is that same sex couples are not protected by law. Here are just two examples of how same-sex domestic partners are discriminated against in insurance. One: The "fair market value" of domestic partner coverage is taxable income to the employee because their partner does not qualify as a spouse under either state law or Federal tax code. And Two: married couples can obtain COBRA coverage for their families, but same-sex domestic partners are never able to obtain COBRA coverage for their partner or partner's children, because government COBRA regulations do not recognize same-sex partners.

POP QUIZ

8

We believe it would improve the quality of life in the Lehigh Valley if all people were equally protected from unfair discrimination based upon actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry or place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, family status, age, disability or use of guide animal, in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodation.

PA-GALA

Valley Free Press

Allentown Human Relations Commission

Safe-Space of Lehigh University

PFLAG Lehigh Valley

ACCO - A Chorus Celebrating Women

GLORA

Pride of the LV

LV Gay Men's Chorus

NCC GLBT Student Union

The Lehigh Valley Labor Party

EQUAL! at Agere

Metropolitan Community Church LV

OutThere - Cedar Crest

9th Street Shelter Allentown

LV Community Action Committee

GLEE at Air Products

FACT

AIDS Outreach

The Unitarian Universalist Church LV

GLOSS

LEPOCO

GLISN of Dun & Bradstreet

AIDS Services Center

Theatre Outlet

Integrity - Bethlehem

The Lehigh Valley Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Civic Theater 19th Street Theatre

The Latin Alliance

The Enigma Players

New Covenant Family Ministries

Properties of Merit

Allentown City Democratic Committee

Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem

Puerto Rican Cultural Alliance

Turning Point of the Lehigh Valley

Muhlenberg Theater Association

To add your organization to this list, call 610-432-5445 or email liztish@aol.com

1. What part of Lehigh County is Carson Kressley from? A. Schnecksville B. Emaus C. Kuhnsville D. Claussville
2. What High School did Carson go to? A. East Penn B. Northwestern Lehigh C. Parkland D. Fogelsville
3. Before Carson began his fashion career he had an interest and job involving: A. Flowers B. Horses C. Dogs D. Cars
4. Why does Carson say he wants to stay in New York rather than moving to L.A.? A. It's more fun to be blond in NYC B. He hates to drive C. He loves Central Park D. Real Pizza

5. Carson went to _____ College. A. Dickinson B. Muhlenberg C. Gettysburg D. Penn State

6. What Greater Lehigh Valley Pride Board Member went to High School with Carson? A. Constance Kristofik B. Brad Wentz C. Pam Pillsbury D. David Baldwin

7. Before Queer Eye, Carson worked for: A. Ralph Lauren B. The Bravo Network C. Liz Clayborne D. DKNY

8. What member of the Lehigh Valley Queer Film Festival Committee also went to the same high school as Carson? A. Liz Sherry B. John Early C. Paul Willenstein D. Gene Kelly

9. Carson is about to do a commercial for: A. Coke B. Pepsi C. Deer Park D. Evian

10. Carson says the pilot show for Queer Eye was so low budget that they had to: A. return all the straight guy clothes after he wore them. B. eat tomato soup for every meal. C. stay in a Korean Church basement. D. shoot a muffler commercial at the same time.

1.D 2.B 3.B 4.A 5.C 6.A 7.A 8.A 9.B 10.C

QUOTE # 6

The sovereign head of another country is giving instructions to our government officials. Yet have you heard one word from our national organizations? -- David Lee in the Advocate on the Pope instructing US Catholics against gay rights and the fear many groups have of confronting it as bigotry.

TO GET A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE VALLEY FREE PRESS JOIN PA-GALA BY SENDING \$20 TO: PA-GALA, P.O. BOX 20825 LEHIGH VALLEY, PA 18002

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QUOTE #1

"Contrary to an October 3 official proclamation by President Bush, the planned activities of 'Marriage Protection Week' have no focus whatsoever on building strong and healthy marriages." -- From the NGLTF analysis of the groups and mission of "Marriage Protection Week," which went on to clarify that the majority of the effort was against same-sex marriage.

QUOTE #2

"I agree wholeheartedly with a statement made by Matthew's mother, Judy Shepard, at a rally in front of the U.S. Capitol earlier this year: 'It is unbelievable that in this day and age... our national leaders have not come together to pass a common-sense law to combat hate crimes in this country.' I call upon President Bush and every member of Congress to put aside partisan bickering for just one day and pass this desperately needed legislation." -- Presidential candidate Howard Dean, supporting passage of an inclusive hate crimes law

QUOTE #3

"Bush is not our spiritual leader but the president of the United States. ... Why is he pontificating about sin in the White House Rose Garden, in the context of having his lawyers look into possible legislation [against gay marriage]?" -- Columnist Michelangelo Signorile, New York Press

QUOTE #4

"So when Wolfson, a national gay-rights leader, hears that his opponents are vowing to wage total war against gay marriage, and reminds himself that his life priorities are opposed by the pope and the president of the United States, he takes comfort in Douglass' admonition that one cannot assume a cleansing rain will arrive 'without thunder and lightning.'" -- On Evan Wolfson of Lambda Legal taking courage to fight far right anti-gay backlash, from the words of abolitionist Frederick Douglass

QUOTE #5

"The worst thing you can do, is not be yourself." -- Carson Kressley on being out, Oct. 26

Distelfink © 11/03 "Just last week..."
by Ruby Zebu

Actual candidate at a candidate forum

I will support your rights whether you are gay or 'what-not.'



There were at least 3 'what-nots' there...

The editorial columns and political cartoon that appear in Valley Free Press express the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or attitude of this publication. VFP makes no indication of the sexual orientation of persons, organizations, or businesses mentioned in any issue.



LIZ OUT LOUD

By Liz Bradbury

NEW ELECTION INFORMATION YOU SHOULD KNOW.

First of all, Charlie Theil (R), candidate for Allentown City Council wrote me an email saying that though he would discuss issues with us, he didn't want to put anything in writing. He said he would call. He didn't.

I think this is particularly low. We give people voter information so they can make informed decisions. Mr. Theil doesn't want you to make informed decisions about him. It is also kind of odd that a person who did not want to put anything in writing, would put that in writing. A few days later we caught an article about Theil in the Allentown Times. It covered Theil's views on the ordinance that protects our rights. In it he was quoted as saying -- "I think people should be protected by the government from harm," but then he went on to say he wasn't comfortable about the coverage of Transgender people. Huh? This guy makes a big point of saying he's a minister. I guess his copy of the Bible says, "love thy neighbor as thyself... except those people."

RE: Joan Orié Melvin (R) who is running for State Supreme Court against Max Baer (D). Baer is firmly supportive of our issues but Melvin has refused to comment. She did however seek GLBT support by mentioning a court decision she made that seemed to support same-sex family rights. However, she also attended a breakfast with Action - an anti-choice, anti-gay, far right Christian group where she blasted her opponent Baer for being pro-choice & pro-gay & stated that she was pro-life. You can't have it both ways, Joan -- I'll be voting for Max.

Locally, Judge candidate in Lehigh County Jim Anthony made a blatant statement in the Morning Call saying he is a "pro-life social conservative." Gee Jim, if anyone in the county hadn't already figured that out from the giant pictures of your military hair buzz, at least they now know. For social conservative -- read anti-GLBT. How would you feel going in front of a judge who has run on that kind of platform?

Meanwhile in Easton at a candidate night at David Ball's House, Easton Mayor Candidate Phil Mitman (R) strongly supported the passage of a local anti-discrimination ordinance. City Council candidates Carol Hefley (D) and Gary Bertsch (R) were also there and supported an ordinance.

At PA-GALA's Bethlehem candidate night Ester Lee (R) who is running against Ishmael Arcelay (D), spoke supportively about a Bethlehem Ordinance.

Back in Allentown, City Council candidates Will Power (D) and Eric Ramirez (R) staged one of the most blatant displays of sour grapes in the City's History. They picketed the Mayor's house during a party he held in support of some other candidates. Public statements by Power made it clear that what he really wanted was Afflerbach's support, but he was holding a "Recall Roy" sign and other signs that referred to taxes. It's hard to support guys that do silly things.

Hey, and get this, Vic Mazzioetti read this column last month! Mazzioetti is running against Frank Concannon for Allentown City Controller. Mazzioetti sent me an email saying he did not believe in discrimination. I wrote back politely reminding him that he signed the referendum petition to take away our rights on May 12, 2002. I pointed out that the petition was presented to him by the President of Citizens for Traditional Values himself. I also mentioned that he had had two chances to fill out the PA-GALA questionnaire, which we mailed to his home, but had not done so. He wrote back again side stepping the issue of his support of the referendum petition by not mentioning it, and said that he had moved last year and didn't get the questionnaire. You would think a guy who wanted a detail oriented job like Controller, would have remembered to give the Post Office a forwarding address. I'll be voting for Frank Concannon.

Last but not least don't forget the District Judge races in Allentown. There are several districts. The candidates I think are best are Patti Engler R/D, Karen Devine (D), and Maryester Merlo (D). Because they are in different districts, they are not running against each other.

Your PA-GALA candidate guide should have come to you in the mail by now. I'll be using mine to vote. Use yours on November 4th.

6

SCOTT SAYS

By Scott Laubner



JUDGE JUDY BACK ON THE BENCH

Have you ever watched Judge Judy and wanted to tell her hush or pat her on the back and say "You go, Girl!"? Either way, now is your chance to do just that. I'm in the Lehigh Valley's only murder mystery dinner theater and our current running show is **Judge Judy Back on the Bench**. The show opens with Judge Judy, many a drag queen's role model, trying three hilarious civil cases. Then things get criminal. I play Bart, her bailiff. The cast includes her hen pecked husband, a goofy detective, an obnoxious millionaire, a chubby Elvis, and a tarty Marilyn Monroe type. This is the closest Judy fans may get without being a defendant in her court. The show runs through January 31. Call the Ramada Inn at 610-439-1037 for reservations.

THE GAYEST MULE UP THE LEHIGH CANAL

Mules are turning up all over; some standing, a few sitting, some very colorful, others a tad plain. I have seen them in Bethlehem, Easton and even as faraway as East Stroudsburg. Their purpose is to create an awareness of our bustling commerce which centered on the Lehigh Canal in the distant past. Mules, as you probably know, hauled the coal laden barges along the canals and rivers. Local artists have displayed their individuality in decorating the mules. By my reckoning the gayest mule is the mirrored one in front of the Lehigh County courthouse. Every time I drive past it I want to hoist it to a ceiling and then spin it around as lights bounce off its mirror covered body. It seems to create an awareness of the 70s disco era. The mules will be on exhibit until November then auctioned off to the highest bidder. What is your favorite mule? Contact me with your vote: scottlaubner@yahoo.com.

PRIDE AND THE QUEER FILM FESTIVAL COMMITTEE THANK...

Pride of the Lehigh Valley would like to thank the following sponsors who made this year's Queer Film Festival possible. It is the generous contributions from caring individuals, merchants and partnering organizations like these, that allows Pride and other groups to enrich and fund ongoing events and programs that support our community.

A very special thanks to Carson Kressley for his generosity to and support of Pride of the Lehigh Valley. And thanks to:

Air Products, The Artists and Film Makers, American Hairlines, Arden Theatre, David Baldwin, house manager/board member, Chris Banko, sponsorship/board member, Arlene Baron, president, The Body Shop, Mark Bodkin, board member, Jeremy Boik, asst. tech director, Boot Girl Punk Shop, Rita Bouché, volunteer coordinator/board member, Liz Bradbury, Bill Brennon, The Colonial House Restaurant, Confetti Café, Teri Courtney, Dan's Camera City, The Dancing Fish Japanese Restaurant, Deja Brew--An Eclectic Eatery, Diamondz, Mr. Diamondz 2003, John Early, technical director, The Express Times, The Foo Foo Shoppe, Fox Optical, Mike Fried, board member, Giant Food Stores, Giovanni's, GLOSS, Godfrey Daniels, The Green Café, Glen Holsten - Director JIM IN BOLD, Home and Planet, Hotel Radisson -- Bethlehem, Suesan "Princess" Hunt, Iannozzi Communications, Inner Journey, J.P. MacGrady's Pub, Julie and Tracy -- HAVEN Youth Members, Nancy Kates, Gene Kelly -- Facilities/Lehigh University, Diane Kraus, The Kressley Family Constance Kristolik -- producer/vice-president, Malcolm Lazin & Equality Forum, Leather Masters, Lehigh University, Little Duck Films, Limousines For Less, Long Consulting Services, The Morning Call, NBC/Bravo, Outrageous Unlimited, Pam Pillsbury -- press liaison/secretary, PFLAG, Le Anne Plattner, Michelle Platt, Cynthia "Charlie" Rodriguez, David Ryder, asst. tech director, Gary Lee Schaefer -- treasurer, Security for Carson (Terry & Jim), Liz Sherry -- curator, Schuykill Valley Sports, Scout Vision, SPECTRUM, Lehigh University, Starfish Brasserie, Stonewall, Touchstone Theatre, Patricia Sullivan, Trainer's Edge, Tret Fure, The Underworld Art Studio, The Valley Free Press, Visual Sound, Our Wonderful Volunteers, Weis Markets, Brad Wentz -- marketing coordinator/board member, The White Swan, Paul Willistein, Bryan Yoder -- HAVEN Co-Chair

PA-GALA thanks Diamondz for hosting the candidate night in Bethlehem and David Ball for the one in Easton. Both were very successful.